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W11052

[Beliefs & Customs?] - Folkways

Accession no.

W11052

Date received 10/10/40

Consignment no. 1

Shipped from Wash. Office

Label

Amount 4p.

WPA L. C. PROJECT Writers' UNIT

Form[md]3 Folklore Collection (or Type)

Title Mrs. Addie Patterson 76 years Furman, S.C.

Place of origin Hampton Co. S.C. Date 6/28/38

Project worker Phoebe Faucette

Project editor

Remarks

Project #-1655

Phoebe Faucette

Hampton County [?] 390559 Records of the Past

MRS. ADDIE PATTERSON

76 Years

Furman, S. C.

Mrs. Patterson is a bright and cheery old lady with a somewhat ruddy look. A photograph, taken of her when she was eighteen, shows a pretty face in a lace cap that covered her head and fell down upon her shoulders. The white lace made a most striking frame for the face with its bright dark eyes and sweet expression. She is pretty still, but has rheumatism and her hearing is bad. Her memory, however, is good, especially concerning the events of her childhood. She says:

“We used to have quilting parties. Oh yes! And log-rollings. They generally went together. The men had to burn everything to get it all off the ground. They'd pile up great piles of logs that'd be handsome timber now and set it afire. There were no sawmills then and they had to clear the land to plant it. Trees that would have been worth thousands of dollars if they'd been sold in today's market - and would be worth milliOns today if they'd been sold to keep on growing. The piles would burn all the night and on into the next day. While the men were working with the logs the women would be quilting. And when night came, they'd all have a big frolic - men, women, and children! About time for the quilt to be taken out the young men would come around, and whoever would get wrapped in the quilt when they threw it out would get a kiss! Sometimes they'd have rail-splittings, too, but not so often. They'd split the rails for fences.

“If a man was sick, his neighbors would take turns giving him

a day's work until his crop was laid by.

“The folks used to live in pole houses. Stopped the cracks with clay. Later on, they took to splitting the poles and ceiling the houses. My father had started a new house when the war broke out. He had to get somebody else to finish it for him. The lumber was sawed at Robertville and planed by hand. It had to be hauled here in wagons all the way from there. The brick were made by hand - burnt there on the place. The house was made of splendid lumber, too, nice, wide lumber. Its standing today. It was set afire three times during the war, but the folks that were in it said they weren't going to get out, so they had to put the fire out.

“My father was in the battle of Honey Hill. Then he went to Virginia. After the war he had to walk home from Virginia! And then after he got home, he had to walk to Savannah to take the oath of allegiance. I was five years old when he got home. I was born in 1860 - December 27th, 1860.

“It took them three or four years to get started again on the farms. They had to first raise the seed, and gradually got enough food, and stock enough to kill some to eat.

“We used to have candy-pullings. But the candy had to be made of sorghum syrup. Didn't have the good sugar-cane they have now. It was a good while after the war before sugar-cane began to be planted in this country.

“That was when we studied the old blue-back speller - Webster's

Elementary Speller. And that was about all we studied, too! After each spelling lesson in the book there was a reading lesson. The words we'd had in the spelling lesson were in the reading lesson so we'd see how they were used. And I tell you, after you'd learned all the words in that speller, you could spell! They taught us this way: anterior. a - n, 'ann'; t - e, 'tea'; r - i, 'rye'; anteri o - r 'or' anterior. Some would say anterior.

“The little boys would wear a long shirt that'd come down to their ankles. They'd have a split at the sides like night shirts have to keep them from falling when they ran. They'd just wear that one garment. They wouldn't have any pants. They'd be made out of cotton Osenberg's, a coarse unbleached homespun. Later on they colored the cloth. They got to raising indigo. That was a blue color. And they'd use bark for dyeing. Sweet gum was a great thing they used, and they'd set it with copperas or lye. They dyed their woolen cloth with the green walnut hulls and set it with lye. Then they'd make a yellow dye out out the leaves of the walnut tree. The cloth was woven by hand. And the thread was spun by hand. My mother had a loom and a spinning-wheel. She'd have negro women to spin for her. Then she'd get someone to come and stay a week at a time to weave. There was

a Miss Margaret [Mixon?] that was the best weaver I knew. She'd come and stay for two weeks at a time. She could weave from five to seven yards of cloth a

day. But she was unusual. She could weave twill cloth, too. And she could check the cloth, and stripe it. I've worn many a dress that she had woven. She married a Long. I remember just how she looked. She was unusual because her hair was so light that it was right white, and her eyes were dark - right black. Her father was an Irishman. Charlie [Hurley?] was his name.

“There weren't so many churches in those days. Steep Bottom was here, and Cypress Creek. They burned Steep Bottom during the war - the first building. Then there was Beech Branch. My grandfather was pastor at Steep Bottom for fifty years - off and on, for fifty years. He preached at Beech Branch, too. They used to have services once a month. He would go up there on a Friday - drive in a buggy - and they'd have preaching Saturday and Sunday. He'd come back Monday.

“Miss Fannie Kittles would talk over all this with me when she was living, but she's gone on, now. She was a Kittles, and married a Kittles, her cousin.”

Source: Mrs. Addle Patterson, Furman, S. C.